



Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

February 16, 2012

Public Hearing

Testimony

By

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Provost

University of Connecticut

Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony on Raised Bill 5028, *An Act Concerning the Alignment of Common Core State Standards with College Curriculum*.

We applaud the Committee for its leadership in raising this bill requiring each local and regional Board of Education to develop a plan to align Connecticut's Common Core State Standards with college level programs at our state's public higher education institutions. Connecticut Common Core State Standards exist in both mathematics and English/Language Arts and will, we believe, help to reduce the achievement gap that exists in our state. We also believe this legislation will help Connecticut students be better prepared to enroll at our institutions and graduate within four years and to succeed in an increasingly global economy. We support all rigorous Connecticut Common Core Standards, and given our STEM interests with Jackson Labs and the Technology Park, are very supportive of the challenging high school requirements in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The University looks forward to working with our Board of Regents and K-12 colleagues on this important initiative.

As always, we thank the Committee for its continued support of the University of Connecticut.

The University of Connecticut has long been committed to ensuring the seamless transfer of students from Connecticut's Community Colleges to our campuses. Our Guaranteed Admissions Program (GAP) started as a pilot program in 2004 with three community colleges -- Manchester, Three Rivers and Quinnebaug Valley -- that built upon existing articulation agreements with the Community Colleges that had been in place beginning in the mid-1990's. In 2008, the UConn's Guaranteed Admissions Program was expanded to all 12 Community Colleges and included 50 majors offered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In 2010, UConn extended GAP to include our School of Business. The Program insures that qualified community college students in their first year have a guaranteed spot at the University of Connecticut provided they complete specified academic conditions including their associate's degree before matriculating in Storrs.

In addition to academic excellence, community college students bring unique experiences and backgrounds that enrich our campus both in the classroom and beyond. Since GAP began in 2008, Over 400 Connecticut community college students have been admitted to the program. As of Spring 2012, 90 GAP students are currently enrolled in degree programs at UConn and as of December 2012, 40 GAP students have graduated from UConn.

What has made UConn's GAP program so successful is the time and effort our faculty have invested in developing a tremendous general education requirements program. We believe the University's general education requirements (which are tailored to each of our schools and colleges) is a model curriculum that should be emulated at the other public colleges and universities across Connecticut. Our general education requirements represent a close collaboration with our colleagues at the Community Colleges and a strong foundation in the competencies our students need to succeed at UConn and in life. Our transfer admissions website (http://transfer.uconn.edu/clas_requirements.html) allow Community College students and others wishing to transfer to the University to quickly identify the types of courses they need to have a seamless transition to UConn.

While the University strongly supports the intent of the legislation, we are concerned that the bill mandates that CSU and UConn automatically accept 30 academic credits toward our general education core curriculum requirements for all transfers. This type of requirement would not be a problem for GAP students following a clearly articulated plan of study. For other transfer students, who may not have taken the appropriate courses, this is more problematic and could greatly affect a student's ability to complete their degrees. It is for this reason that we request that the last sentence of the bill be deleted.

As always, thank you for your continued support of the University of Connecticut.